(c) what has been the price pattern of pulses during the last three years; and

(d) what steps are being contemplated to make pulses available to the common people at reasonable prices in view of the record output?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHYAM LAL YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir

(b) According to present assessments, the total production of pulses during the year 1988-89 is expected to be in the range of 14.0—14.5 million tonnes

(c) The Average Index Numbers of Wholesale Prices of Pulses (1970-71 = 100) during the years 1986, 1987 and 1988 (provisional) were 424.5, 463.4 and 627.1 respectively.

(d) All the States/Union Territories have been advised by the Department of Civil Supplies to include pulses for distribution through Fair Price Shops at reasonable prices. As per the reports available, the State Governments of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Haryana, Himahcal Pradesh, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh, Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep have included pulses among other items for distribution through Fair Price Shops on their own.

The State Governments have been advised from time to time to monitor the prices and availability of essential commodities including pulses.

Allegations against Manager of N.C.C.F.

1797. SHRI BIR BHADRA PRATAP SINGH
SHRI MOHINDER SINGH LATHER:

Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to refer to replies to Unstarred Question 996 and 1138 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 18th November, 1988 and state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news item appearing in Nav Bharat Times, dated 10th January, 1989 under the caption "Aaropon" se Ghire Afsar Ko Tarraqqi";

(b) if so, whether it is a fact that N.C.C.F has posted the said officials to the sensitive post of Chief Manager (Business) at Head Office despite the serious allegations have prima-facie proof against him; and

(c) if so, what are the reasons for not taking any administrative action against the officer concerned?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI D.L. BAITHA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The officer concerned has been transferred form the post of Chief Manager (Business)

(c) On the basis of the advice of the Central Vigillance Commission, major penalty proceedings are being initiated aginst him by the NCCF.

Irregularities in NCCF, Delhi

1798. SHIR BHAGATRAM MANHAR: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to refer to answer to Starred Question 465 given in the

Rajya Sabha on 5th December, 1986 and stat.

(a) whether any disciplinary action has been taken aginst the then Br Manager, Delhi who was allegedly responsible for various irregularities as indicated in the audit report of Director (ACW&M) pertaining to Delhi Branch of NCCF for the year 1983-84, and

(b) if not, what are the reasons for the same and by when action is likely to be taken aginst him?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI D.L. BAITHA). (a) NCCF have reported that no disciplinary action has been taken against the then Branch Manager, Delhi.

(b) On the basis of the explanation obtained by the NCCF from the Branch Manager concerned, the matter is under consideration at Government's level.

Strategy to achieve foodgrains production target

1799 SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the rainfall has not been favourable for agriculture during the year 1988-89; and

(b) if so, what strategy Government propose to adopt to achieve the annual prodcution of 172 million tonnes in this year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHYAM LAL YADAV): (a) and (b) No, Sir By and large the rainfall has been very favourable for agricultural production during the year leading to a record foodgrains production during 1988-89.

Progress in providing drinking water facilities in villages

1800. SHRIMATI KANAK MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of villages in the country;

(b) how many villages have arrangements for safe and protected drinking water facilities; and

(c) what are the reasons for slow progress in providing drinking water facilities there?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI JANARDHAN POOJARI): (a) As per 1971 census in the case of Assam and Tripura and 1981 census in case of all other States/UTs, there are 5,82,971 Villages in the country.

(b) 5,51,816 villages have arrangements for atleast one or more source of safe drinking water facilities as on 31.1.89.

(c) The progress of coverage of Problem Villages (PVs) with safe drinking water facilities in the country is satisfactory. All the PVs are likely to be covered in the 7th Plan except in the case of Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Punjab. In these States about 3347 PVs are likely to spill over to the 8th Plan due to difficult nature of the terrain/topography of the area, limited working season, non-availability of adequate financial resources, lack of infrastructure and lack of man power resources.